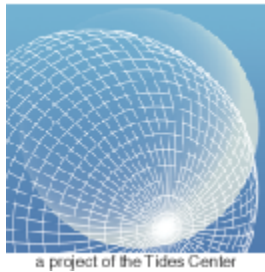


www.pewinternet.org



Pew
Internet
& American Life
PROJECT

**EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE AT NOON, EASTERN ON
DECEMBER 29, 2002**

COUNTING ON THE INTERNET

MOST EXPECT TO FIND KEY INFORMATION ONLINE

MOST FIND THE INFORMATION THEY SEEK

MANY NOW TURN TO THE INTERNET FIRST

Principal authors: John B. Horrigan, Senior Research Specialist
Lee Rainie, Director

PEW INTERNET & AMERICAN LIFE PROJECT
1100 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, NW – SUITE 710
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036
202-296-0019

[HTTP://WWW.PEWINTERNET.ORG/](http://www.pewinternet.org/)

Summary of Findings

With over 60% of Americans now having Internet access and 40% of Americans having been online for more than three years, the Internet has become a mainstream information tool. Its popularity and dependability have raised all Americans' expectations about the information and services available online. When they are thinking about health care information, services from government agencies, news, and commerce, about two-thirds of all Americans say that they expect to be able to find such information on the Web. Internet users are more likely than non-users to have high expectations of what will be available online, and yet even 40% of people who are not Internet users say they expect the Web to have information and services in these essential online arenas.

Internet users are very likely to say that they expect the Web to be a source of information on health care, government agencies, news, and shopping. About 80% of Internet users say they expect the Web to have information in these topic areas. These high expectations are driven by experience. Of Internet users who have sought information from the Web on these topics, about three-fourths have had positive experiences in finding what they need. For many of these Internet users, the Net is the first place to which they will turn next time they need information about a government service or health care.

Here is how Americans line up when probed about specific topics and whether they think the Internet will satisfy their information needs:

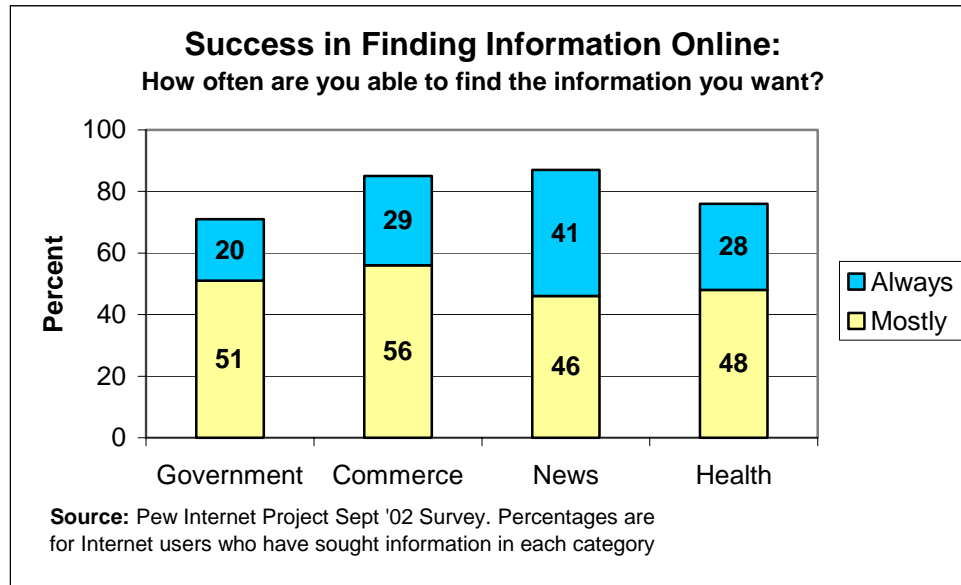
- For information or services from a **government agency**, 65% of all Americans expect the Web to have that information; 82% of Internet users say this and 39% of non-users say this.
- In the realm of **electronic commerce**, 63% of all Americans expect that a business will have a Web site that gives them information about a product they are considering buying. Four out of five (79%) of Internet users say this and 38% of non-users say this.
- For **news**, 69% of Americans expect to be able to find reliable, up-to-date news online; 85% of Internet users say this, compared with 43% of non-Internet users.
- For **health care** information, 67% of Americans expect that they can find reliable information about health or medical conditions online; 81% of Internet users say this versus 45% of non-Internet users.

Overall, 84% of *all Americans* have an expectation of finding information online in at least one of these four topical areas. That translates into nearly all Internet users (97%) and most non-Internet users (64%).

When it comes to **personal information**, the story is different. Only 31% of Americans expect to be able to find reliable information about someone online; 35% of Internet users

say this and 25% of non-users say this. However, 58% of Internet users say they expect to be able to reach someone via email.

In looking at how successful Internet users have been in finding the information they need online, the following chart shows how Internet users fare when they go online to satisfy information needs. Most of the time searchers in these categories find what they want—more than 70% in all categories. For news, 41% of online news hounds say they always find what they want on the Net.



There is also abundant evidence that the Internet is now the primary means by which many people get key information.

- When asked where they will go for information the next time they need information about government or a service it provides, 58% of Internet users say they will go online next time they need government information; this compares with 28% who say they will use the telephone. When all Americans are asked this, 39% of all Americans say they will go online. This is about the same share (37%) that says they will call.
- When asked where they will go for information the next time they need health or medical information, Internet users are about as likely to say they will turn to the Internet for information as they are to contact a medical professional; 46% say they will find health care information online next time they need it and 47% say they will contact a medical professional. Overall, 31% of all Americans say they will find it online, while 59% say they will contact a medical professional

For business, it is clear that an online presence is important, regardless of whether a business actually sells its wares over the Internet. If a store provides product information online, even if it doesn't sell products at its Web site, nearly half of all Americans (46%)

said this would make them more likely to go to the physical store to buy the product. About the same number (45%) said it would make no difference, and these numbers were the same for Internet users and non-users alike.

COUNTING ON THE INTERNET

Introduction

The dissemination of the Internet has transformed how many Americans find information and altered how they engage with many institutions, such as government, health care providers, the news media, and commercial enterprises. Terms such as electronic commerce, e-health, telemedicine, and e-government were novel ten years ago. Today, major newspapers and magazines routinely have special sections on these topics, with many having feature sections on these subjects regularly. A growing body of government researchers, market research organizations, and scholars has begun to focus on these areas. With the steady growth of Internet penetration, and the sometimes-fevered focus on the Internet's transformative potential, Americans have begun to expect a lot from the Internet.

Although it is difficult to pinpoint when the Internet began to create expectations among all Americans about the availability of online information, two snapshots taken from the past couple of years are informative. Pew Internet Project researchers found during a study of community technology initiatives in Cleveland in late 2000 that some low-income people who came to the community center to pick up Internet skills were driven in part by aggressive marketing campaigns by major Internet service providers. But these nascent users had a very thin knowledge base. They wanted to know about the CD-ROMs they were receiving in the mail and what the Internet was all about. Fast forward two years later to another community technology center in Virginia, and Pew Internet researchers found that very new Internet users quickly embraced the Internet for sophisticated applications such as filling medicine prescriptions online. For whatever reason—whether it is a larger Internet population or the numerous stories about the Internet on TV and in the newspapers—new Internet users seem to go online expecting to find information that matters to them.

Another—and probably more important—reason for rising expectations about the Internet-as-information-utility has to do with the growing ranks of veteran Internet users. At the end of 1999—about the time the first articles began to appear worrying about “Internet hype”—only about one-third of Internet users had been online for three years or more. In September 2002, for the first time, two-thirds (68%) of Internet users said they have been online for three or more years; nearly two in five (38%) say they have been online six years or more. With growing online experience comes greater skill at finding things online. And notwithstanding the dot-com shakeout, the passage of time has meant more useful content becoming available on the Web. The upshot is more information online and more experienced users searching for it with greater ability to separate the wheat from the chaff. The result is high expectations about what is online.

A final piece of the picture is the growth of Web sites that help deliver on expectations and that have become, for many Internet users, trusted online sources and tools. “Google” was a word that would have elicited, at best, a raised eyebrow among Americans a few years ago. Today, the popular search engine is, according to comScore Media Metrix, the fourth rated Internet property (in terms of unique visitors). “Google” is

a verb commonly used among the Internet cognoscenti in referring to online searches. Upstart sites such as eBay, Amazon, iVillage, Classmates.com, and Travelocity serve the needs of numerous Internet users and are among comScore's top 20 sites. More established companies, such as AOL Time Warner, Microsoft, Walt Disney, and the New York Times have popular Web sites that serve a range of users' informational and transactional needs.

The testimony of Internet users speaks loudly about the expectations that people bring to their online information searchers. We asked Internet users who come to the Pew Internet Project Web site the following question: "Does the Internet deliver on your expectations? For example, when you need information, do you expect to find answers online? If you are not able to find the information, do you give up the search or go to an off-line source?" Although the respondents were far from a random sample, most respondents were enthusiastic in saying that the Internet delivered on their informational expectations.

Several users focused on how the Internet helps them find information about their hobbies and home repair. One user, referring to parts for aging household appliances, said he has had "such luck finding unusual things online that I am a total convert." Another noted that he has come to expect success for "very obscure information" pertaining to painting the antique cars he owns. Other users extolled the Internet's virtues in educating them about medical conditions. One talked of being diagnosed with Marfan syndrome, a heritable disorder of the connective tissue that affects organ systems such as the lungs, eyes, and heart. This Internet user said that "without the WWW [Worldwide Web] I would have been completely lost" about finding out more about the condition. Another person said that the Web had become the main resource to find an experimental treatment to address a neurological syndrome that afflicts the user.

PART 1: EXPECTATIONS ABOUT FINDING INFORMATION ONLINE

When looking at each of the four topical areas about which we inquired (government, commerce, health, and news), about two-thirds of all Americans, roughly 80% of Internet users, and 40% of non-Internet users said they would expect to find information online about these topics. This section aggregates data about expectations of online information by examining how many Americans expect to find information on the Internet in at least one of the four topic areas we asked about. As it turns out, 84% of all Americans expect to find online information about at least one of these topics; that is nearly all Internet users (97%) and most non-Internet users (64%).

Expectations about finding online information about either government, health care, news, or commerce ...			
	All Internet Users	All Non-Internet Users	Total (% Americans who expect to find online)
Yes, would expect	97%	64%	84%
No, wouldn't expect	3	36	16

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Survey, September 2002. Sample=2,092 adults. Margin of error is $\pm 2\%$.

Age is the primary demographic factor in determining expectations about finding information online. The table below reproduces the one above for Americans age 65 and older, 395 of whom were in our September 2002 sample and 22% of whom are Internet users. A slim majority (51%) of older Americans say they expect to find information in at least one of our four topical areas. This compares with 91% of Americans under age 65 who say this and the 84% for all Americans. Looked at differently, of the 16% of Americans who do not expect that they can find information online in the four areas, half (51%) are over age 65.

Expectations of senior citizens about finding online information about either government, health care, news, or commerce ...			
	Senior Internet Users	Senior Non-Internet Users	Total (% Seniors who expect to find online)
Yes, would expect	86%	41%	51%
No, wouldn't expect	14	59	49

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Survey, September 2002. Sample=395 adults over the age of 65. Margin of error is $\pm 6\%$.

PART 2: THE INTERNET AS THE FIRST OPTION

FOR IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Expectations about finding information online are one thing, but trusting the Internet to produce what you want during your next important information search is another. For government and health care information, we asked all Americans to anticipate the next time they may need information in these areas. We then asked them: Where would you turn for information? For health care information, 31% of all Americans said they would first turn to the Internet. For government information, 39% of all Americans said they would first turn to the Net. About one in five (21%) Americans revealed themselves to be very heavily reliant on the Internet for carrying out tasks. These people answered the “Internet” when asked if they would turn to the Net for health care information and government information next time they do such searches.

Demographically, those who say they would turn next to the Internet for both government and health care information tend to be women (driven by the fact that 58% of those who say they would turn first to the Net for health care information), people who have children under age 18 in the household (47% do versus 35% of all Americans), and those who are white. Those who are most likely to turn to the Internet first are among the Internet’s most experienced. About three in eight (38%) of Internet users have been online for six or more years, but close to half (47%) of those who would first turn to the Net for government and health information have been online for six or more years.

There is a subset of non-Internet users—about 16%—who say they would turn to the Internet first for either health care information or information from a government agency. On its face, it may seem anomalous that *any* non-users turn first to the Net for information. However, the Pew Internet Project’s March-May 2002 survey shows that about 17% of people who identify themselves as non-Internet users once used the Internet on a regular basis. Moreover, 20% of non-users say they live in a household in which another person uses the Internet in the same household. It is possible that non-users in our September 2002 sample, because of past usage or proximity to a current user, know what the Internet has to offer.

Relative to other non-Internet users, non-users who say they will turn to the Net next time they need government or health information are more likely to be women, people between the ages of 18 and 29, those who are employed, and those who are non-White. Although we did not ask in September 2002 whether non-users used to use the Internet, our “turn to the Internet first” non-users in September 2002 have demographic characteristics similar to the “used to surf the Internet” non-users of March-May 2002. In particular, both groups are more likely than other non-users to be young, non-White, and employed.

PART 3: HIGH EXPECTATIONS ABOUT E-GOVERNMENT

The number of Americans using the Internet to find out about government services has grown substantially since the Pew Internet Project first inquired about this in March 2000. Then, 47% of Internet users had sought information from state, local, or federal government Web sites; that translated into about 40 million Americans. By the summer of 2002, 62% of Internet users had done this. With the growth in the Internet population during that time, this means 71 million Americans had gone online to find government information by mid-2002. The breadth of things surfers seek at government Web sites is striking; people look for tourist information, they download government forms, they check to see what services are available, and they look for potential opportunities to do business with government or handle their transactions like applying for benefits or renewing car registrations.

If you need information from a government agency, would you expect to be able to get the information or service from the agency's Web site?			
	All	Internet Users	Non-Internet Users
Yes, would expect	65%	82%	39%
No, wouldn't expect	28	15	48
Don't know	8	4	14

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Survey, September 2002.

Sample=2,092 adults, 1,318 Internet users. Margin of error is $\pm 2\%$ for full sample and $\pm 3\%$ for Internet users.

With more Americans using the Web to find out more about their government, this has had a kind of viral effect on people's expectations about online government information. All in all, 65% of Americans expect to find government information online, with four out of five Internet users expecting to find government information on the Net.

Success is apparently breeding the high expectations among Americans about the Web as a source of government information. About three quarters (71%) of Internet users say that they "always" or "most of the time" find what they are looking for when they go to a federal, state, or local Web site. One in five (20%) say they always find what they need at government Web sites.

A consequence of rising expectations about online government information is that the Net is becoming the first choice for most Internet users when it comes to accessing government information. A small plurality of all Americans say they would first turn to the Net for government information, and nearly three in five Internet users say this. For those Internet users who have gone to a government Web site (57% of online users), three quarters (74%) say they will turn to the Internet first when they next need government information.

The next time you need information or services from a government agency are you more likely to go to the agencies Web site, call it on the telephone, go to the agency in person, or write a letter?			
	All	Internet Users	Non-Internet Users
Go Online	39%	58%	10%
Use the phone	37	28	50
Go in person	9	5	15
Write a letter	8	4	15
N/A or don't know	6	4	10

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Survey, September 2002.
Sample=2,092 adults, 1,318 Internet users. Margin of error is $\pm 2\%$ for full sample and $\pm 3\%$ for Internet users.

PART 4: THE INTERNET IS THE FIRST CHOICE FOR MANY HEALTH INFORMATION SEEKERS

The number of Americans who use the Internet to find health care information has been on the rise, with online health and medical information playing a growing role in people's interactions with their doctors. When the Pew Internet Project first inquired in March 2000 about online health care, 46 million Americans had used the Internet to find health care information. By October 2002, that number had grown to 73 million. People go online to get information about specific illnesses, weight control, and prescriptions drugs. Most those who look for health information online – we call them “health seekers” – are women, and often they are looking for information on behalf of someone for whom they are caring. Health seekers are typically careful to consult with a medical professional before acting upon online medical information.

If you need reliable information about health or medical conditions, would you expect to be able to get that information online?			
	All	Internet Users	Non-Internet Users
Yes, would expect	67%	81%	45%
No, wouldn't expect	29	16	48
Don't know	4	3	7

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Survey, September 2002.
Sample=2,092 adults, 1,318 Internet users. Margin of error is $\pm 2\%$ for full sample and $\pm 3\%$ for Internet users.

Most Americans expect to be able to find reliable health care information online, which helps explain why such information plays a growing role in the decision-making of health seekers. Two-thirds (67%) of all Americans expect to find reliable health care information online, with four out of five (81%) of Internet users saying this and 45% of non-Internet users expecting reliable medical information to be online. The success rate among online health seekers is also very good. Three quarters (76%) of health seekers say they “always” or “most of the time” find what they are looking for when they take to the Internet for health care information; 28% “always” find what they need.

Most strikingly, Internet users are about as likely to say they will go online the next time they need medical information as they are to contact a medical professional. Nearly half (46%) of Internet users say they will use the Internet next time they need reliable health care information. This is statistically the same as the 47% of Internet users who say they will contact a medical professional. The Internet as the first choice for medical information is especially true for health seekers. Fully 58% of health seekers say they

will first go online when they next need reliable health care information; 35% say their first move would be to contact a medical professional.

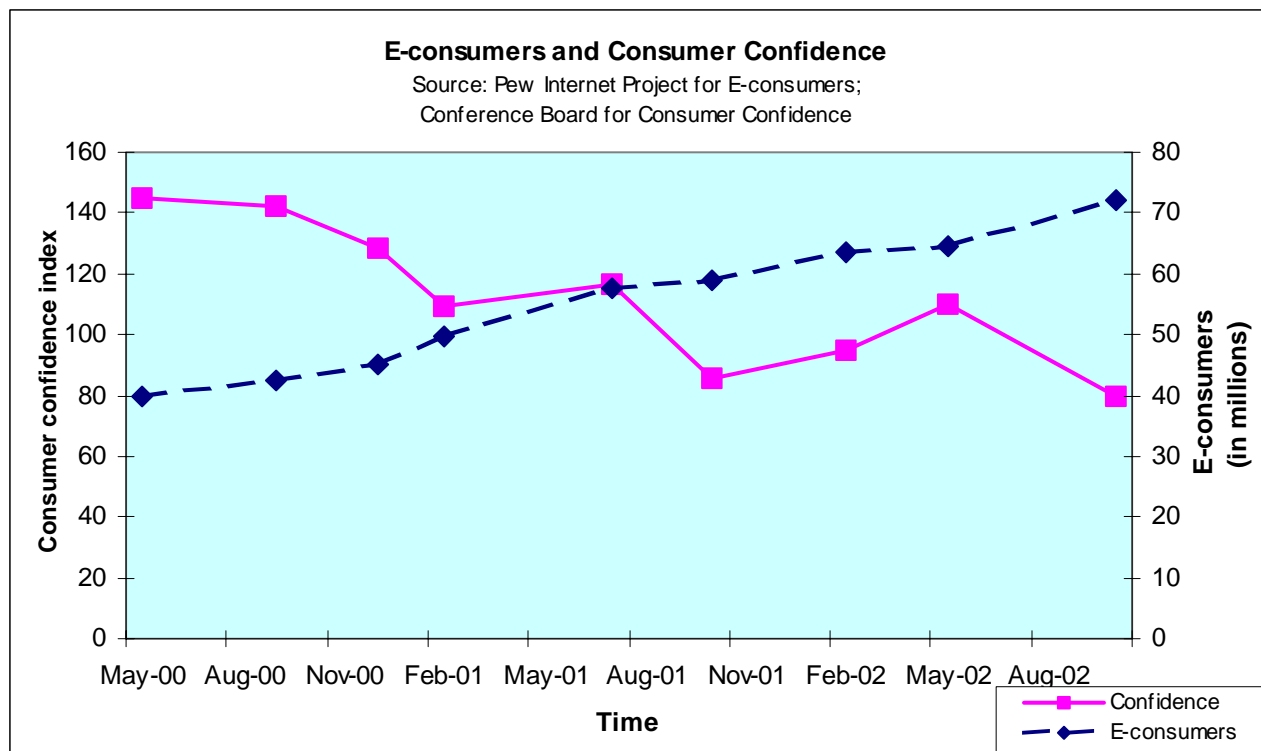
All in all, about one-third (31%) of all Americans say they will turn to the Internet next time they need health care information, while 59% they will contact a medical professional. About one in twelve non-Internet users – 8%– say they will turn to the Internet first when they next need medical information. For those users, they probably will turn to a trusted caregiver with online access for this information.

The next time you need reliable information about health or medical conditions, will you be more likely to try to find it online, will you contact a medical professional, or try some other means to get the information?			
	All	Internet Users	Non-Internet Users
Find it Online	31%	46%	8%
Contact medical professional	59	47	79
Some other way	8	6	11

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Survey, September 2002.
Sample=2,092 adults, 1,318 Internet users. Margin of error is $\pm 2\%$ for full sample and $\pm 3\%$ for Internet users.

PART 5: ONLINE COMMERCE SWIMS AGAINST THE TIDE OF FALLING CONSUMER CONFIDENCE

Even with so many dot-com companies going out of business in the past two years, online purchasing by consumers has followed a steadily upward path. In March 2000, 40 million Americans – or 48% of Internet users – had purchased a product online. That number grew to 72 million – or 62% of Internet users – by the beginning of October 2002. This growth has occurred at a time when the United States has suffered a mild recession and tepid subsequent economic growth, and as consumer confidence has sagged. As the graph below shows, the trend lines for consumer confidence and growth in the number of e-consumers run in very different directions.¹



The main reason for the growth in the population of e-consumers is increasing comfort with online transactions for Internet users. Novice Internet users are hesitant to conduct transactions online, as they worry about the safety and security of sending a credit card number over the Internet. As they learn from friends and family that online transactions infrequently result in credit card theft – only 3% of Internet users have had a credit card number stolen online, according to our findings in 2000 – they make that first transaction. Once that barrier is crossed, logging on to buy something becomes routine for Internet

¹ The Conference Board develops an index of consumer confidence based on monthly surveys of 5,000 U.S. households, asking about respondents' perspectives on current economic conditions, the employment outlook, and the economic outlook six months hence. An index value of 100 equals the index's value in 1985; the index's highest value was 144.7 in the spring of 2000.

users. Consumer comfort with the online world breeds growing confidence in ecommerce, even in the face of general declines in consumer confidence. This explains the growth in consumer buying online; according to BizRate.com, online retail sales in the United States totaled \$10 billion in the third quarter of this year, a 37% increase from a year earlier.

All of this adds up to high expectations about finding product information online. Fully 63% of all Americans say they expect to find information at a store's Web site about a product they may want to purchase or learn more about. This breaks down to 79% of Internet users saying this and 38% of non-Internet users saying they expect to find product information online. And success rates run high for online purchases; 85% of those who have ever bought products online say that they "always" or "most of the time" able to find and buy the products they seek. Three in ten (29%) of online buyers say they always find and buy the products they look for online.

If you needed information about a product or wanted to buy a product from a store, would you expect to be able to do so on the store's Web site?			
	All	Internet Users	Non-Internet Users
Yes, would expect	63%	79%	38%
No, wouldn't expect	32	18	53
Don't know	5	3	10

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Survey, September 2002.

Sample=2,092 adults, 1,318 Internet users. Margin of error is $\pm 2\%$ for full sample and $\pm 3\%$ for Internet users.

With many people relying on the Internet for product information, it is not too surprising that having an online presence – even if a store's Web site is not transactions-enabled – helps bring people into merchants' doors. We presented Americans the following scenario about merchants' online presence: If a store provided only product information online, but did not sell products on its Web site, would you be more likely, less likely, or would it make no difference to you? About half of Americans (46%) said a Web site – even one that did not permit online purchasing – would make it more likely that they would go to the physical store to but the product. Only 6% said that such a Web site would make it less likely that they visit the store, with 45% of Americans saying it would make no difference. These numbers are the same for Internet users and non-users alike. In other words, having a Web site helps a business even if the site does not enable transactions.

If a store provides product information, but does not sell products online, are you more or less likely to go to the physical store to buy products there?			
	All	Internet Users	Non-Internet Users
More likely	46%	47%	46%
Less likely	6	7	4
No difference	45	44	47

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Survey, September 2002. Sample=2,092 adults, 1,318 Internet users. Margin of error is $\pm 2\%$ for full sample and $\pm 3\%$ for Internet users.

PART 6: EASY-TO-FIND, RELIABLE NEWS DRIVES ACTIVE NEWS SURFERS

The audience for online news has been seen substantial growth in the past two and one-half years. In March 2000, about 52 million Americans (or 60% of Internet users) had gone online for news, a figure that increased to 82 million (or 70% of Internet users) by October 2002. The newsgathering habits of these Internet users are quite varied.

Convenience is key for most Internet users, whether they bookmark a weather site for the latest weather report or they go online for political news during election season. A number of Internet users get political news online that they cannot find elsewhere, and in times of crisis, like September 11, the Internet helps people dig deeper into issues that are occupying the nation's attention.

Most Americans (69%) say they expect to find reliable, up-to-date news online, with 85% of Internet users saying this and 43% of non-Internet users saying this. For those who have gone online for news, 87% say they have found what they have sought out. Two out of five online news surfers (41%) saying they "always" find what they need, the highest of any of the four categories we queried.

If you need reliable, up-to-date news, would you expect to be able to find this online?			
	All	Internet Users	Non-Internet Users
Yes, would expect	69%	85%	43%
No, wouldn't expect	26	13	47
Don't know	5	2	10

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Survey, September 2002. Sample=2,092 adults, 1,318 Internet users. Margin of error is $\pm 2\%$ for full sample and $\pm 3\%$ for Internet users.

Because most Internet news surfers expect to find what they need online and are successful finding it, these users surf for news on the Internet frequently. About one-quarter of the online population looks for news on the Net on a typical day, which is less than half the rate at which Internet users watch TV news on a daily basis (59%). However, the faster the Internet connection, the smaller is the gap between daily newsgathering online and on television. About 60% of Internet users with high-speed home connections watch a TV news program on a typical day, while 43% of broadband users get news online on a typical day. For all Internet users—high-speed and dial-up alike—the Internet is an indispensable supplement to their newsgathering habits

With the Net clearly a place many Internet users turn to for news—and with most meeting success when they go online for news—we asked online news surfers to tell us where they turn when they *fail* to find a specific news item online. Cable TV comes out ahead, with 34% saying they would turn to a cable TV news program, followed by 30% who say they would consult the newspaper. About one in six (15%) say they would look to Network TV news, 5% said the radio, and 11% would stop looking altogether. For the

11% of Internet users who do not bother searching beyond the Internet for a specific news item, it seems that expectations shape behavior. Nearly all of these users (96%) expect to be able to find news online and 40% of them have home broadband connections, meaning getting news online is very convenient. And 44% say they “always” find the news they want when they go online. It is little wonder that if the news is not available for these users, they give up on their search.

PART 7: FINDING PEOPLE

The practice of using the Internet to track down old friends or get background information about a new acquaintance or business contact is popular among Internet users. Often called “Googling”, named after the search engine, about one-third of Internet users have turned to the Internet to find out something about other people. Vanity is a driver for personal searching, as well; one in four Internet users have entered their own name into a search engine to see what turns up.

With the popularity of such personal online detective work, 35% of Internet users have come to expect the Net to have reliable information about people. Moreover, Internet users expect to be able to contact other people using the Internet. Fully 58% of Internet users say they expect to be able to contact someone using email. For those Internet users who see the Internet as a source of reliable information about other people, 72% say they expect to be able to contact other people using email. A sizable chunk non-Internet users see the Internet as a place for reliable information about others; 25% of non-users expect that the Net will have reliable information about individuals.

When you need reliable information about someone, would you expect to find it online?			
	All	Internet Users	Non-Internet Users
Yes, would expect	31%	35%	25%
No, wouldn't expect	61	58	65
Don't know	8	7	10

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Survey, September 2002.
Sample=2,092 adults, 1,318 Internet users. Margin of error is ±2% for full sample and ±3% for Internet users.

METHODOLOGY

This report is based on the findings of a daily tracking survey on Americans' use of the Internet. The results in this report are based on data from telephone interviews conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates between September 9 and October 6, 2002, among a sample of 2,092 adults, 18 and older. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 2 percentage points. For results based Internet users (n=1,318), the margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting telephone surveys may introduce some error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

The sample for this survey is a random digit sample of telephone numbers selected from telephone exchanges in the continental United States. The random digit aspect of the sample is used to avoid "listing" bias and provides representation of both listed and unlisted numbers (including not-yet-listed numbers). The design of the sample achieves this representation by random generation of the last two digits of telephone numbers selected on the basis of their area code, telephone exchange, and bank number.

New sample was released daily and was kept in the field for at least five days. This ensures that complete call procedures were followed for the entire sample. Additionally, the sample was released in replicates to make sure that the telephone numbers called are distributed appropriately across regions of the country. At least 10 attempts were made to complete an interview at every household in the sample. The calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chances of making contact with a potential respondent. Interview refusals were recontacted at least once in order to try again to complete an interview. All interviews completed on any given day were considered to be the final sample for that day.

Non-response in telephone interviews produces some known biases in survey-derived estimates because participation tends to vary for different subgroups of the population, and these subgroups are likely to vary also on questions of substantive interest. In order to compensate for these known biases, the sample data are weighted in analysis. The demographic weighting parameters are derived from a special analysis of the most recently available Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (March 2001). This analysis produces population parameters for the demographic characteristics of adults age 18 or older, living in households that contain a telephone. These parameters are then compared with the sample characteristics to construct sample weights. The weights are derived using an iterative technique that simultaneously balances the distribution of all weighting parameters.

PSRA calculates a response rate as the product of three individual rates: the contact rate, the cooperation rate, and the completion rate. Of the residential numbers in the sample, 71.5 percent were contacted by an interviewer and 48.6 percent agreed to participate in the survey. Eighty-eight percent were found eligible for the interview. Furthermore, 92.2 percent of eligible respondents completed the interview. Therefore, the final response rate is 32.1 percent.